

THE REMONSTRANCE.

BOSTON, MASS., 1891.

The Remonstrance is addressed to the Legislatures of the several States by Women Remonstrants against the extension of the suffrage to women. It expresses the views of such Remonstrants in Massachusetts, Maine, Illinois, and other States who believe that the great majority of their sex do not want the ballot, and that to force it upon them would not only be an injustice to women, but would lessen their influence for good and imperil the community. The Remonstrants ask a thoughtful consideration of their views in the interest of fair discussion.

PECULIAR COMBINATIONS.

THE woman suffrage agitation results in some peculiar combinations. The Chicago Tribune of December 22 contained a report of the meeting of the Trades and Labor Assembly the previous afternoon, Sunday. There were present, it said, about 175 delegates and the same number of visitors, "among whom were quite a crowd of women who had come to learn the report of the American Federation of Labor on the question of woman suffrage." Among the women thus employed that Sunday afternoon are mentioned Mrs. Fanny Kavanaugh, Miss Kate Kane, Mrs. Loomis, and Mrs. Brown of the Woman's Alliance. This is what they witnessed:—

About this time Jack Lavine walked in and took the seat of the secretary, temporarily vacant. When the secretary returned and asked for his seat, Lavine replied:—

"Whatcher mean? My seat? Want-er—want-er make a bill fer 'vestigation committee?"

It was with some difficulty that Lavine could be induced to move. As he started off he encountered Mr. Pomeroy, to whom he made some remark inaudible to those around. Pomeroy replied in a loud tone:—

"Don't you talk to me, or I'll give you a biff in the nose."

Lavine was very much intoxicated, and made another remark, at which Pomeroy jumped up and struck him in the chest. Then the excitement commenced. Men ran to stop the fight. Women screamed and ran to the exit. The men were separated and Lavine finally removed.

Tommy then told of the miners being the trade selected to strike for eight hours' work in May. He finally said that the American Federation of Labor, representing 500,000 workingmen, had requested the consideration by the people of an amendment to the National Constitution securing to women the exercise of rights of suffrage.

This combination for the elevation and purification of politics seems rather a peculiar one.

RECENT DEFEATS OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

RESULTS IN 1889.

In Maine, a municipal suffrage bill was defeated in the House, February 28: yeas, 42; nays, 90. The Senate rejected the bill by a vote of yeas, 9; nays, 17.

In New Hampshire, the Constitutional Convention gave the suffragists "leave to withdraw."

In Dakota, where two years before a municipal suffrage bill passed both branches of the Legislature, and was vetoed by the Governor, a similar bill was twice voted down in the Legislature of 1889. Introduced again in a modified form, limiting the privilege to tax-paying women, the measure met with a third and final defeat, February 27.

In Ohio, a municipal suffrage bill was defeated in the House, and a proposition for a suffrage constitutional amendment also failed of adoption.

In Nebraska, the Legislature voted to "indefinitely postpone" a municipal suffrage bill.

In Nevada, a proposed amendment to the Constitution, admitting women to the suffrage, was voted down.

In Massachusetts, a municipal suffrage bill was defeated in the House, March 12: yeas, 78; nays, 127. A license suffrage bill which had been engrossed by the Senate, May 16: yeas, 15; nays, 12, reached the House May 24, and was referred to the next General Court by a vote of 101 to 42.

In Connecticut, a woman's suffrage amendment to the Constitution was rejected: yeas, 44; nays, 90. Four other suffrage measures were defeated, namely: a municipal suffrage bill, a license suffrage bill, a school suffrage bill, and a bill exempting women from taxation until such time as they are given the ballot.

In Michigan, a municipal suffrage bill, which passed the House: 58 yeas; 33 nays, was defeated the same day in the Senate: 10 yeas, 16 nays.

In Minnesota, a municipal suffrage bill was killed in the House by the acceptance of an adverse report of the committee.

In New York, the Assembly, March 25, defeated the bill conferring municipal suffrage upon women.

In the new State of Washington, October 1, a woman suffrage article in the Constitution was submitted to the people, and rejected by a vote of about two to one.

In Montana, the Constitutional Convention voted down propositions to empower the Legislature to confer the suffrage upon women, to submit the question to the vote of the people every four years, and to submit a separate suffrage article at the same time with the Constitution.

In North Dakota, the Constitutional Convention rejected a proposition to remit the whole question to the Legislature, and adopt a clause requiring a vote of the people to ratify any act of the Legislature conferring suffrage upon women.

RESULTS IN 1890.

In North Dakota, March 4, a Senate bill submitting to a vote of the people a constitutional amendment giving women the right to vote, was defeated in the House after an animated debate.

In New York, April 18, the Assembly rejected a municipal woman suffrage bill: yeas, 48; nays, 60. The adverse vote was considerably heavier than in 1889.

In Massachusetts, April 17, the House rejected a municipal women suffrage bill: 73 yeas; nays, 141, including pairs. In 1889, the vote on a similar bill was 90 yeas; 139 nays, including pairs. The vote of 1890, therefore, shows a net loss of 19 for the bill.

In Mississippi, in the Constitutional Convention, the Committee on Suffrage reported favorably, 17 to 11, on a proposition giving full suffrage to all women owning property worth \$400, the suffrage to be exercised by proxy. The Convention rejected the proposition. The Convention also voted down a proposition to empower the Legislature to grant suffrage to women; and the Constitution, adopted November 1, restricts the suffrage to male citizens.

In Vermont, November 11, a bill giving "taxable female citizens the right to vote in town, village, and fire district meetings" was rejected: yeas 98, nays 113. The next day a motion to reconsider was lost: 56 yeas, 120 nays.

In South Dakota, November 4, after a vigorous campaign on the part of the suffragists, an amendment to strike the word "male" from the Constitution was submitted to the vote of the people. It was rejected; 22,972 votes were cast for, and 45,682 against, it.

In Kentucky, in the Constitutional Convention, an unavailing attempt was made to secure favorable action on a proposition to extend the franchise to women.

In Oklahoma, in December, a bill conferring full suffrage upon women was rejected by the House: yeas 9, nays 10.

SOME WOMEN'S VIEWS.

Do the most intelligent women want the suffrage? If it were granted, would the best women, those of character, refinement, and intelligence, use it regularly? These are important questions. It was admitted, a year or two ago, by the President of the Maine Woman's Suffrage Association, that "the majority of women are opposed to woman suffrage." There is reason to believe that the aversion to the suffrage is especially strong among the more intelligent and thoughtful of the sex. Some time ago, The Philadelphia Times printed a "symposium" of the views of well-known women on this subject. Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton wrote:—

I have never desired suffrage for women. I think woman has her sphere and man his sphere, and that these spheres are not interchangeable. Nevertheless, if suffrage were given to women, I fear that I should feel it my duty to vote. But I, for one, would prefer that no such additional burden should be laid upon me.

To the question whether she would vote if the privilege were given her, Mrs. Celia Thaxter replied: "I have only to answer, 'No.'" Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher wrote:—

If suffrage were given to me, I certainly should not go to the polls without my husband's company. Had that right been given me before he was taken from me, it is not necessary for me to say what I would have done.

Mrs. Julia C. R. Dorr, while she thought it would be the duty of women to vote, if the suffrage were given them, said:—

I have not yet been convinced that the granting of the right of suffrage to woman would, on the whole, be to her advantage or to that of the State.

Mrs. Augusta Evans Wilson, the author of "St. Elmo," expressed very forcibly as follows her objections to having suffrage thrust upon her sex:—

Under no imaginable circumstance could I go to the polls or exercise the right of voting. American women enjoy without restraint every civil, social, ethical, and intellectual right compatible with feminine delicacy and refined Christian womanhood; and to invite them into the arena of politics would prove subversive of all domestic quietude, loosen the ties that link them to their true kingdom, the home hearth, and prove as disastrous to harmonious social order as did the "wooden horse" to the households of Troy. "Woman's right to vote" would involve the forfeiture of woman's privilege of commanding the reverence and deferential homage of mankind. Feminine opinion is a powerful political factor when expressed gently in the sacred precincts of

home, by dropping ballots of noble aims and exalted principles and sentiments into the open hearts and minds of brothers, husbands, and sons; but wrangling and wrestling at "election polls" would inevitably resolve the whole question of woman's political influence into one of mere numerical valuation.

"Marion Harland" wrote, with scarcely less emphasis:—

Under no circumstances would I exercise the right of suffrage were it possible for me to do so. I see no benefit that could accrue to my sex by such an act. On the other hand I see the harm which might ensue. There is a great deal of talk about the refining influence of woman upon politics, but the coarsening effects of politics upon woman are evidently overlooked. No, no! I do not wish to vote, and I hope the day may be far distant when my sex is given the lawful right to do so.

Anna Katharine Green, author of "The Leavenworth Case," declared that she had no sympathy with the woman's suffrage movement, and added:—

When I think of the attendant necessities, such as separate polls for women, women inspectors of election, the means of appointment and the gradual merging of the detestable features of practical politics into a woman's life, I cannot but say that it is bad enough when men are compelled to mingle in the crowd that stir up the ingredients thrown into the political caldron.

Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox wrote that she should not vote, as she has "only enough mentality, vital force, and time now to inadequately meet the demands of nearer duties than national affairs." Mrs. Adeline D. T. Whitney said:—

I *might* vote if pressed into the necessity by the voting of all sorts of other women, but I shall hope that it may never fall to my experience. I believe that woman occupies a central, not an external place in the order of things, and I do not wish that order turned inside out.

Mrs. Rebecca Harding Davis wrote:—

Should the right of suffrage be extended to women? I am very sure that I for one should sit by the fire on election day while my cook and laundress voted. I do not believe that I should be any more conscientious or faithful to my duty in this matter than are the majority of educated American men in our cities who now leave the control of the primary elections and the polls to men who are neither educated nor American.

Mrs. Rose Terry Cooke replied very positively:—

Nothing would induce me to go to the polls and vote. For the reason that I do not think it is a woman's place or within a woman's capacity to do so. I fully agree with St. Paul in his estimate of a woman's powers and duties.

Among the participants in the symposium were a number of well-known suffragists and some others who either believe that the privilege should be granted, or, if it were granted, would exercise it; but the views quoted above define the position of the large majority of American women.

WHAT WYOMING IS LIKE.

WHEN the agitation was in progress for the admission of Wyoming as a State, those who were interested in the movement made estimates of the population of the then Territory which put it as high as 120,000, and in no instance below 100,000. Since then, the census enumerators have been their rounds, and their returns have been tabulated. What is the result? The exact population of the State is 60,589. This puts the State one notch below the new Territory of Oklahoma, which was opened to settlement only two or three years ago, but already contains 61,701 persons, or more than 1,100 more than the State of Wyoming. As regards population, Wyoming stands number 47 in the list of 49 States and territories. Yet this handful of people, fewer than the population of the city of Cambridge, Mass., but scattered over an area eleven times as large as that of the State of Massachusetts, elects two members of the United States Senate, and one member of the House of Representatives.

After twenty years' experience with woman suffrage, it should not be too much to assume that the politics of Wyoming would illustrate the refining and elevating influence of the votes of women, of which so much is predicted. On the eleventh of January the first State Legislature of Wyoming, which had been elected by the votes of men and women, closed its session. The incidents which attended the adjournment are thus described in a despatch from Cheyenne to The Chicago Herald:—

After a mildly exciting session in the House the first State Legislature concluded its labors at six o'clock this morning. The subject of the bitterest contention was an apportionment bill which had passed the Senate two weeks before. The animosity of representatives of certain sections was aroused to a vindictive and desperate pitch by alleged unjust provisions of this measure. It was denounced with oaths, hands went to hip pockets, exposing revolvers, and the disreputable trading was denounced in scathing terms. The bill recorded had been changed to show that

it had been read twice. This was done to avoid a suspension of the rules by a two-thirds vote, as was actually required. The treachery was discovered. A quiet member mounted the reporters' table, shook his fist in the face of the presiding officer and swore roundly at the fraud. The sergeant-at-arms was called. He was threatened with violence, and did not appear. A member who had a few hours before, in presenting a gavel, spoken in honeyed terms of the speaker's fairness, shouted that it was a miracle the words had not choked him. A collision was averted by the action of the speaker in forcing the question of indefinite postponement, and this disposition was made of the bill.

This scene certainly was not devoid of animation, but must it not be somewhat disappointing to those who have argued that with the participation of women in politics a gentle and urbane influence would diffuse itself through every department of public activity?

NO GROUND GAINED.

THE Woman's Journal affirms that "the year 1890 will be historical for woman suffrage victories." To any one who is familiar with the facts this assertion must appear an extraordinary exaggeration. The fact is that the cause of woman suffrage did not gain a foot of territory during the year. Wherever it presented itself, in State Legislature, in constitutional convention, or before the people, it was beaten. The accuracy of the statement of suffrage defeats during the years 1889 and 1890, elsewhere printed, cannot be impeached. It is a complete epitome of the woman suffrage movement in this country during the past two years. As to England and the various British dependencies, the same thing is true. No ground has been gained anywhere. As to the admission of Wyoming as a State, that has simply enlarged the political influence of a female population which has had the ballot for twenty years, and which numbers but a few thousands.

WHAT IS THE REASON?

MRS. LUCY STONE BLACKWELL, in a letter in The Boston Advertiser, dated January 17, 1891, says:—

Thousands of women in the different States looked this year eagerly at the inaugural messages of their respective governors to see if any good thing had been recommended for women. But they have looked only to be disappointed.

This is a surprising statement. Something like thirty Legislatures were convened in regular session early in January, and to them the governors of the several

States addressed suggestions and recommendations. In not a single instance, according to this veteran advocate of woman suffrage, did a governor recommend the extension of the franchise to women. What is the explanation? If woman suffrage is a great and crying need, if it is true that women themselves, as a rule, desire or demand it, how could it be that in no single State could they secure a recommendation of the policy from the executive? Are we to assume that all these governors are blind to the real wants of the people, or is it the fairer assumption that they none of them recommended woman suffrage simply because they perceived that there is no *bona fide* call for that experiment, and that the agitation for it is extremely limited and unrepresentative?

MR. GLADSTONE'S POSITION.

ON the eleventh of July, 1890, Mr. Gladstone made an address to the young ladies of the famous Burlington School in London, on "The Higher Education of Women," in the course of which he alluded to the movement for securing political privileges for women. Mr. Gladstone's address throughout was marked by a highly respectful and chivalrous tone, and evinced the fullest sympathy with those who desire for women the highest possibilities of physical, intellectual, and spiritual success in life. He described the great progress which had been made in educational methods during the last half-century, and the elimination of many of the inequalities to which women had been subjected by unjust laws, and then, referring to the current political agitation, he said:—

Whether all these greater changes that are so much discussed and to which so many look forward with eager anticipation will be for good, I will not undertake to say. I will only say that I believe that anything which attempts or affects to alter the fundamental relation which the Almighty himself has established, and the designs which he has marked out in our constitutions and capacities, to draw woman out of her own sphere and to expect her either to exchange it for the sphere of man or to act in both with efficiency—that scheme that involves changes of that kind, for my own part I contemplate neither with approval—if I may speak of anything so insignificant as my own approval of so great a scheme—nor with a sanguine expectation of happy results.

Proceeding, he quoted the remark once made to him that it was not the Whigs or the Tories but the mothers of England who would save England, and he said:—

The words are full of wisdom. The value and the importance of this office are such that nothing, no additions that we can possibly make to the women's functions, can stand for a moment in comparison with it as regards the very vital bearing upon the formation of character in every one of us; and what is the formation of character except that for which God sent us into the world? It is the sum and substance, the beginning and the end of the whole matter, and it is to the formation of character that it is the bright and glorious function of woman, partly as teacher, and largely as teacher, but infinitely more as a mother, to contribute.

These certainly are wise and moderate words, and it is difficult to believe the reports current at the time that some of the political women who were present when the address was made so far forgot the proprieties of the occasion as to hiss the venerable and honored statesman who uttered them. The warning of Mr. Gladstone against the effort to draw woman out of her own sphere and "to expect her either to change it for the sphere of man or to act in both with efficiency" deserves the thoughtful attention of those who have regard for the true dignity of womanhood.

THE BOSTON SCHOOL VOTE.

THE REMONSTRANCE, in its last number, directed attention to the returns of the woman's vote for school committee in Boston as evidence of the uncertain and fluctuating character of that vote as a political factor. The election of December, 1890, which has since taken place, still further illustrates this point. We give below the figures of the registration and vote of women for ten years:—

Year.	Women Registered.	Women Voting.
1881	748	640
1882	567	498
1883	701	650
1884	1,119	1,026
1885	2,238	2,062
1886	1,193	878
1887	837	725
1888	20,252	19,490
1889	10,589	10,051
1890	7,918	7,800

The general interests involved in the administration of the schools are of course as important in one year as in another; yet we find them drawing to the polls one year only 498 women, and in another year 19,490. What occasions the difference? As is generally known, it is due to a religious and emotional agitation, which reached its climax in 1888. The subsidence of this agitation was attended by a falling off of one half in the aggregate vote in 1889, and by a still further reduction in 1890.

THE DEFEAT IN SOUTH DAKOTA.

THE attempt last year to carry South Dakota for the proposed amendment striking out the word "male" from the State Constitution resulted in an overwhelming defeat. The enterprise was made a national affair by the endorsement of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, and by large gifts of money and literature in aid of the campaign. The State was thoroughly organized and closely canvassed, and for three or four months meetings in advocacy of the amendment were held in all parts of the State. The leaders in the national organization took an active part personally in the campaign, and there has been no such concentration of suffrage effort in any State since the defeat in Rhode Island. The State Convention of Farmers' Alliances was induced to declare in favor of the amendment, but of the two old parties, the Republican convention ignored the issue, and the Democratic convention pronounced against the amendment. The proposition was submitted to the people November 4, and was defeated: yes, 22,972; no, 45,682.

CONCESSIONS OF A SUFFRAGIST.

THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON, of Massachusetts, a lifelong advocate of woman suffrage, took occasion some time ago to consider in *The Forum* some of the "Unsolved Problems of Woman Suffrage." His article is remarkable for its frank concession of some of the gravest objections of those who oppose the extension of the suffrage to women. Mr. Higginson thinks that the mass of women are indifferent to the suffrage rather than hostile to it, but he argues that "the indifference of the mass of women is a point to be considered;" and he says, "I cannot go along with those who think that a very few women should be allowed to vote, even if their sex, as a whole, be ever so disinclined to it," for, he concludes, "the enfranchisement of women will affect the sex as a whole; it will throw a new responsibility upon all, whether they wish it or no." As to the danger to be apprehended from the presence of ignorant and vicious women at the polls, Mr. Higginson says, "Because only the educated and refined women have as yet voted for school officers, it is unsafe to infer that there will not be, in times of social excitement, some concourse of the rude and the ignorant, even of the vicious;" and

he adds: "I fancy that the bravest person would rather face a mob of men than of women." If anarchy and socialism are looming up as serious prospective dangers among men, though he is not convinced of this, he admits that they "are no less serious as seen among women." Mr. Higginson concedes the fluctuating character of the prospective woman vote when he says: "We shall very likely see, as a further result, a wider range than now exists between the maximum and minimum votes at different elections." Of the grave moral perils attending the exercise of suffrage by women, Mr. Higginson speaks with great plainness as follows:—

Who that remembers the Woodhull and Claflin period of our social history, or the Beecher-Tilton controversy, can look without some anxiety to the utterly unrestricted mingling of men and women, in periods of great excitement and under the strongest inducements to use whatever means of influence may prove most potent in dealing with one another? Grant, for the sake of argument, that the persons immediately concerned in public life, under the new order, are likely to be utterly above all personal danger in this close intercourse, what is to guard them against the evil of suspicion? There will be no point so vulnerable, no mode of attack so promising, as those growing out of the question of personal chastity, in these untried relations. To all the present opportunities for scandal there will be added a new one; and this, in the hands of an unscrupulous antagonist, will be worth all the rest put together. Woman suffrage, it may be urged, may improve the wisdom and justice of legislation, especially as regards women themselves, but it will hardly promote, at first, the purity and decency of political campaigns.

How serious is the estimate which Mr. Higginson places upon these moral perils is shown by the fact that he actually suggests as a remedy the establishment of separate legislative bodies of men and of women! It appears therefore from these concessions of one of the most prominent suffrage leaders that among the consequences to be anticipated from woman suffrage are an uncertain and fluctuating vote, a considerable increase of the ignorant and vicious vote, and moral perils so serious as to suggest the need of separate male and female legislatures. What excuse or justification is there for forcing an experiment which is fraught with such grave perils?

WOMAN IN POLITICS.

WOMEN in England have a limited form of municipal suffrage, and, by means of various kinds of political organization, they have for some time participated

more actively in public agitations than American women. It is possible, therefore, to obtain from the English experience some idea of the probable nature and direction of feminine political activities. Upon this point a thoughtful article which appeared in *The London Graphic* of May 17, 1890, is very suggestive. The writer said:—

It has become pretty evident lately that the action of women in the political world is a force which statesmen will soon have to take very seriously into account. The dames of the Primrose League have exercised no slight influence in more than one of the recent by-elections, and this week we have been reminded by the meetings of the Woman's Liberal Federation that women on the Liberal side are not less enthusiastic than those of them who act with the Tories. That the leading women on both sides display much ability and zeal must be admitted. Nevertheless, a good many people who have always been favorable to the introduction of the feminine element into politics are probably rather disappointed by the line political women have hitherto chosen to adopt. The chief reason why it is desirable that they should have a voice in the management of national affairs is that there are some great and difficult public questions with which they are, or ought to be, specially competent to deal. These are the questions by which the poorer class of women and children are more particularly affected. Now there is nothing to show that the members of the Women's Federations and Leagues are devoting themselves to the consideration of these vital subjects. Their attention is given chiefly to the ordinary topics of current political controversy with which all of us are only too familiar. Women who desire to play an important part in politics ought at present to be absorbed by the study of the report on Sweating, and of all the perplexing problems suggested by the facts set forth in that terrible document. If they would think more about such things and less about party disputes, they would give the best possible proof of their fitness for a definite and recognized place in our political system.

DISAPPOINTMENTS IN ENGLAND.

THE year 1890 was one of disappointments to the suffrage leaders in England. The efforts which they made to get their cause before Parliament, even in the modified form of a resolution expressing the views of the House of Commons, were futile. The position of Miss Cobden and Miss Cons, who were elected County Councilors in London in 1889, has attracted much attention in Parliament and the courts. Lady Sandhurst, who was elected at the same time, made a test case to determine her rights and was defeated. After waiting a year, the period of limitation for challenging elections, Miss Cobden and Miss Cons took their seats in the board. A bill was introduced in the House of Lords to enable women to serve as county councilors and aldermen, but it was rejected. An action was brought against Miss Cobden for the usual penalties for acting as a member of the London County Council when she was disqualified. The case was decided by the Queen's Bench, November 24, 1890, and judgment was given against Miss Cobden in the sum of £25 on each of five separate charges, making a total penalty of £125, with costs.